

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 04570 031037Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SS-15 EB-08 NSC-05
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SP-02 L-03 PRS-01 TRSE-00
OMB-01 PM-05 DODE-00 /083 W
-----088968 031047Z /23

P 030918Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8703

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4570

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, NL, PARM, SF

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR OPTIONS

REF: THE HAGUE 4429; STATE 209421, (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO DUTCH CHARGE DE JONGE, FOURIE'S
REFERENCE TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NUCLEAR
OPTIONS WAS INTENDED AS NO MORE THAN AN EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF
SENTIMENT WHICH COULD ARISE AMONG SOME SOUTH AFRICANS IN RESPONSE
TO MOUNTING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES ON SOUTH AFRICA. IT WAS
NOT A SUGGESTION OR THREAT THAT THE SAG MIGHT AT SOME POINT
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PAGE 02 PRETOR 04570 031037Z

CONTEMPLATE FOLLOWING SUCH A COURSE. END SUMMARY.

2. DE JONGE TOLD US LAST EVENING, SEPTEMBER 2, THAT HIS
AUGUST 30 APPOINTMENT WITH FOURIE HAD BEEN ARRANGED IN RESPONSE
TO DE JONGE'S REQUEST ABOUT THREE WEEKS AGO FOR A MEETING.
THE PURPOSE WAS A TOUR D'HORIZON. DE JONGE USED THE OCCASION
TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE RESULTS OF THE OWEN-YOUNG VISIT AUGUST 28-30.

AFTER MAKING AN UNINFORMATIVE REPLY, FOURIE TURNED TO THE DUTCH STAND AT THE LAGOS ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE IN FAVOR OF A MANDATORY ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. THERE ENSUED A LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF VARIOUS KINDS OF EXTERNAL PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA. FOURIE STRESSED THAT CONTINUALLY INCREASING "UNREASONABLE" PRESSURE WAS STIMULATING A SPIRIT OF STOUT RESISTANCE AMONG SOUTH AFRICANS, INCLUDING SOME OF THE MORE LIBERAL ELEMENTS. ACCORDING TO DE JONGE, IT WAS IN THIS CONTEXT, AND WITH DUTCH PROMOTION OF A MANDATORY ARMS EMBARGO SPECIFICALLY IN MIND, THAT FOURIE SAID ACCUMULATING PRESSURES MIGHT EVEN LEAD SOME SOUTH AFRICANS TO ADVOCATE THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NUCLEAR OPTIONS. IN DESCRIBING THE CONVERSATION TO US, DE JONGE WAS EMPHATIC THAT THERE WAS NO IMPLICATION THAT THE SAG MIGHT CONSIDER SUCH A COURSE. "THERE WAS NO NUCLEAR BLACKMAIL."

3. DE JONGE SAID HIS FIRST REPORT ON THE MEETING WITH FOURIE HAD INDEED AROUSED THE CONCERN OF HIS FOREIGN MINISTER, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE IT COINCIDED WITH MINISTER HORWOOD'S PUBLIC ASSERTIONS ON THE SAME SUBJECT. INTERPRETING FOURIE'S REMARKS AS POSSIBLE NUCLEAR BLACKMAIL, VAN DER STOEL CONSIDERED CALLING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN AMBASSADOR. THE HAGUE ASKED FOR A DETAILED REPORT ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONTENT OF THE TALK WITH FOURIE. DE JONGE BELIEVES HIS RESPONSE SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT FOURIE WAS NOT THREATENING BUT MERELY ILLUSTRATING THE KINDS OF EXTERME REACTION WHICH MIGHT ARISE AMONG SOME SOUTH
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PAGE 03 PRETOR 04570 031037Z

AFRICANS AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE PRESSURES BEING EXERTED ON SOUTH AFRICA. DE JONGE HAS HEARD NOTHING FURTHER FROM THE HAGUE.

4. COMMENT. DE JONGE WAS OPEN, FRANK AND THOROUGH IN GIVING US THIS ACCOUNT OF HIS DISCUSSION WITH FOURIE AND IN ACKNOWLEDGING HE COULD UNDERSTAND HOW HIS INITIAL REPORT WAS MISINTERPRETED. BELIEVE WE CAN TAKE WHAT HE TOLD US AS ACCURATE. THE DUTCH MFA AFRICA DIRECTOR IS WIDE OF THE MARK IN SPECULATING THAT FOURIE MAY HAVE BEEN THOUGHTLESS ABOUT SOME OF THE THINGS HE SAID IN THE HEAT OF DEBATE (PARA 3, THE HAGUE 4429). THAT WOULD BE OUT OF CHARACTER.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, NUCLEAR ENERGY
Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PRETOR04570
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770320-0052
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770999/aaaadfju.tel
Line Count: 106
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7145fb4d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 THE HAGUE 4429, 77 STATE 209421
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1391327
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR OPTIONS
TAGS: PDEV, PARM, NL, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7145fb4d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009